

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) ~~An internet~~ The telephony system according to claim 6, supporting simultaneous voice and data communications with a user, comprising a server for receiving a request to establish a voice communication with the user over a digital data communications channel having a state, independent of a communication channel over which the request is communicated, and being determined by prior activity of a user over the digital data communications channel, and in response to the received request, establishing the user voice communication in dependence on the state and a set of user preferences, wherein the server has a first available option to conduct the voice communication using a voice over Internet Protocol communication mode through the data communications channel and a second available option to conduct the voice communication over a communications channel distinct from the data communications channel and involving a public switched telephone network, ~~the server executing an application program communicating with telephony hardware to implement telephony system control, said application program having an application programming interface, wherein said application program includes as one of its~~ ~~is~~ application programming interface functions a call to an external program.

2. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 1, wherein said digital data communications channel carries data between a user terminal and a web server, the web server communicating with a distinct server for establishing the user voice communication channel involving a the public switched telephone network.

3. (Cancelled) The telephony system according to claim 1, wherein the user communicates with the server using a browser, and the set of user preferences are retrieved based on a cookie.

4. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 6 4, wherein the user interactively communicates through the data packet switched network digital data communications channel to establish the state, and the server establishing the voice communication being further responsive to an economic interest of a party distinct from the user.

5. (Cancelled) The telephony system according to claim 1, wherein the user, in order to communicate with the server to request a voice communication, need only initiate a generic action which is interpreted by the server in accordance with the state and the user preferences to initiate an appropriate response.

6. (Currently Amended) An Internet telephony system for providing communications involving a user communicating through an Internet browser, comprising a server hosting a Web site, said server executing an application program communicating directly with telephony hardware to implement telephony system control, said application program having an application programming interface, wherein said application program includes as one of its application programming interface functions a call to an external program, wherein a message is proactively transmitted from the server to the Internet browser based on an automated analysis of a status of the user with respect to Web site, requesting establishment of an interactive voice communication session, and wherein the user can allow initiation of the

interactive voice communication session through the Internet browser, wherein a set of user preferences are retrieved by the server, defining a preferred communications mode selected from the group consisting of voice over a data packet switched network and a public switched telephone network, and wherein the user status with respect to the web site is derived from an automated analysis of a shopping cart.

7. (Cancelled) The telephony system according to claim 6, wherein a set of user preferences are retrieved by the server, defining a preferred communications mode selected from the group consisting of voice over a data packet switched network and a public switched telephone network.

8. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 6-7, wherein the user preferences are retrieved in a cookie.

9. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 6-7, wherein the user interactively communicates with the Web site to establish the status, the request for establishment of an interactive voice communication session being responsive to an economic interest of a party distinct from the user.

10. (Cancelled) The telephony system according to claim 7, wherein the user status with respect to the web site is derived from an automated analysis of a shopping cart.

11. (Currently Amended) An Internet telephone system according to claim 6, further comprising a browser having a displayed hyperlink for presentation to a user, a selection of said hyperlink causing the browser to communicate with a server, retrieve user-related data, and open a voice over Internet protocol communication between the user and a second party, the system comprising an application program communicating with telephony hardware to implement telephony system control, said application program having an application programming interface, wherein said application program includes as one of its application programming interface functions a call to an external program.

12. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 6-11, wherein the user is charged for the communication.

13. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 12, wherein the user ~~charge~~ is charged a micropayment.

14. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 6-11, wherein a set of user preferences is retrieved in a cookie from the browser.

15. (Cancelled) The telephony system according to claim 11, wherein the status of the communication session between the browser and the server comprises a status of a shopping cart.

16. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 6 44, wherein the initiation of the interactive opening of a voice over Internet protocol communication is dependent on an economic interest of a party distinct from the user.

17. (Cancelled) A telephony server, comprising an application program communicating directly with telephony hardware to implement telephony system control, said application program having an application programming interface, wherein said application program includes as one of its application programming interface functions a call to an external program.

18. (Currently Amended) The telephony system server according to claim 6 47, wherein the application external program is a dynamic link library adapted to run under Microsoft Windows operating system.

19. (Currently Amended) The telephony system server according to claim 6 47, wherein the application program may spawn a plurality of instances of the external program simultaneously.

20. (Currently Amended) The telephony system server according to claim 6 47, wherein the application program has a first component running on a telephony server and a second component running on each telephony client.

21. (Currently Amended) The telephony system server according to claim 6 ~~17~~, further comprising a communications link to a Web server, for coordinating telephony functions and Web server functions.

22. (Currently Amended) The telephony system server according to claim 6 ~~17~~, wherein the application program interfaces with a monetary accounting system.

23. (Currently Amended) The telephony system server according to claim 6 ~~17~~, wherein the application program interfaces with a micropayment accounting system.

24. (Currently Amended) The telephony system server according to claim 6 ~~17~~, wherein the application program supports an application service provider payment model.

25. (Currently Amended) The telephony system according to claim 6 ~~4~~, wherein the user ~~communicates with the server using a browser, and the set of user preferences are retrieved based on a cookie~~, in order to communicate with the server to request a voice communication, need only initiate a generic action which is interpreted by the server in accordance with the state and the user preferences to initiate an appropriate response.